

March 18, 1960.

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Dear Harold:

Thank you very much for your letter. Frankly, no prior tour of mine in the past fifteen years has been so tiring as the one I completed in South America. The combination of dust, crowded days and summer heat persuaded me that I am not as young as I was when we were together in Algiers.

I have not read General De Gaulle's memoir -- but I shall make an effort to get the third volume of which you speak. It has been a source of amazement to me that he seems to be unable to fathom the methods by which our three governments could easily keep in close touch on main issues. I explained to him how you and ourselves used both normal diplomatic exchanges, personal communications and, in acute cases ad hoc committees to keep together. I think that the difficulty may lie in his memory of the British-American "Combined Chiefs of Staff" of World War II days, and his resentment that the French staffs were not integrated into that body. In any event, I have always made it clear that I was ready to do anything reasonable to maintain contacts and mutual understandings among us three; I adhere to this policy. But I think I made it also clear to him that it was impractical to have frequent "Heads of Government" Conferences and yet, as you say, he seems to prefer this kind of approach to any on our common problems.

The Chancellor and I got along famously. While I had been informed, a day or so in advance of our meeting, that he had expressed a great deal of uneasiness to friends in New York concerning Western firmness in preserving our rights in Berlin, he did not raise this question with me. I conversationally

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E.O. 12065, Sec. 3-204

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reassured him on the point, as I have often done before, and he seemed pleased that I had mentioned the matter. He did not show any concern about it. A day or so later, the Chancellor went to a dinner with Secretary Herter and I hear that some misunderstandings arose which seemed to annoy him. I do not believe, however, that the points of difference involved fundamentals.

All of us -- including Mr. K. -- seem in accord on one subject: the need for progress in controlled disarmament. We seem to be as far apart, as between East and West, as we possibly can be, on the procedures for attaining the objective. I would derive tremendous satisfaction out of seeing some specific practical step agreed upon at the Summit, and initiated as soon as practicable. Such an accomplishment would be tangible evidence of some real progress in a knotty problem that has engaged your effort and mine for a number of years. It would be a ray of light in a world that is bound to be weary of the tensions brought about by mutual suspicion, distrust and arms races. Strangely, I never lose my conviction that sooner or later in some fashion or other, we shall bring about some rift in the clouds. But at the same time I must confess at times to a great feeling of impatience.

I forgot to say that the Chancellor is very much preoccupied with the 1961 elections in his country. He made a point of saying that even the opposition agree with him that all of us, and particularly, all of Germany, must be adamant concerning the allied occupational rights in Berlin. Any seeming weakening of this position would, he believes, have a most damaging effect on his party's position next year.

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When we finally get together, maybe we will have an opportunity to compare notes on these journeys that we have been making here and there about the world.

With warm regard,

The Right Honorable Harold Macmillan, M.P.
The Prime Minister,
London.

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